OFFICER REPORT

Case No: 24/02342/HHFUL **Householder (Full)**

Proposal: **Retention of pool building, basement car park, lift and enclosure, external courtyards, pond and associated hard and soft landscaping (revised siting), phased alterations to pool building (reduction in height), removal of staircase, removal of glazed balustrade to pond and alterations to fenestration of main facade**

Location: **Hemingford Park Hall Hemingford Park Common Lane**

Applicant: **Dr Phil Kaziewicz**

Grid Ref: **527610 270937**

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

The application for planning permission relate to Hemingford Park, a grade II* listed building. The house and its extensive parkland are in the Hemingford Abbots Conservation Area. The house stands in the countryside approximately 400m south of Common Lane.

This application seeks permission for a Retention of pool building, basement car park, lift and enclosure, external courtyards, pond and associated hard and soft landscaping (revised siting), phased alterations to pool building (reduction in height), removal of staircase, removal of glazed balustrade to pond and alterations to fenestration of main façade.

There is an accompanying Listed Building Consent 24/02343/LBC.

Officers have scrutinised the plans and have familiarised themselves with the site and surrounding area.

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the three objectives - economic, social and environmental - of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF 2021 at paragraph 10 provides as follows: 'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).'

The NPPF 2024 sets out the Government's planning policies for (amongst other things):
* delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
* building a strong, competitive economy;
* achieving well-designed, beautiful and safe places;
* conserving and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Planning Practice Guidance and the National Design Guide 2021 are also relevant and material considerations.
For full details visit the government website: https://www.gov.uk

PLANNING POLICIES

Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 (Adopted 15th May 2019)

LP11: Design Context
LP12: Design Implementation
LP14: Amenity
LP34: Heritage Assets

Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017):
* Place Making Principles 3.7 Building Form
Local policies are viewable at https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

PLANNING HISTORY

None relevant.

CONSULTATIONS

Hemingford Parish Council – Recommend neither for nor against this application. Given that the majority of the plans that have been submitted have been accepted by HDC and Heritage England. We wish to record the following: HAPC strongly supports HDC's requirement that the newly laid tarmac is lifted and replaced with a more suitable surface in keeping with a heritage site. HAPC will request that HDC Building Control carries out an audit on the completed work to ensure that it has been carried out to the proposed specifications and meets the required standards.

Historic England – No objection.

Conservation Team – No objection subject to the inclusions of conditions to control landscaping.

Full consultation responses are available on the website.

REPRESENTATIONS

3 representations received from neighbouring properties on the following grounds:
* Not a householder application
* Scale and design of development is unacceptable and commercially driven
* The development includes separate holiday lets and spa facilities
* The hard landscaping, including a large paved area and driveway, is inappropriate for a householder development, especially in this protected setting
* If the hard standing joins the unlawful road within the curtilage of the main house, then presumably the road which extends across the ridge and furrow should be included within this application, as it is a development requiring excavation within the curtilage of the main house (and a listed building) for which planning permission has not been granted.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are:
* Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets
* Residential Amenity
* Other Matters

* Design, Visual Amenity and Impact on Heritage Assets.

The application site, relates to the Grade II* Listed Hemingford Park Hall which is also within the Hemingford's Conservation Area. The wider site contains some separate Grade II Listed outbuildings with additional curtilage listed structures.

Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Section 66 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Para. 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification…'

Local Plan policy LP34 aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice.

Policy LP11 of the Local Plan states that proposals will be supported where it is demonstrated that they positively respond to their context and draw inspiration from the key characteristics of their surroundings, including the natural, historic and built environment. Policy LP12 of the Local Plan states that proposals will be supported where they contribute positively to the area's character and identity and where they successfully integrate with adjoining buildings, topography and landscape.

Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was granted in 2014 under application reference numbers 1400578FUL and 1400579LBC for various works to the dwelling and site but also the construction of a glazed link to run between the kitchen of the main house and construction of a newly constructed, submerged pool house with sliding glass roof.

Subsequently the pool house was not built in accordance with the approved plans and the applications which are subject to this appeal sought to regularise the works.

The 'As Built Scheme' differs from the approved and consented scheme 1400578FUL and 1400579LBC in that:
• The pool house has been built further away from the Hall than was consented.
• Minor variation and increased height of wall to western side of building (within walled garden).
• Variation to the internal plan form and levels.
• A subterranean car park with vehicle lift and surrounding enclosure has been constructed on the north side of the pool house.
• The overall height of the pool house taller than the consented scheme.
• A roof terrace has been created at second floor level.
• A spiral staircase has been attached to the north elevation of the pool house to provide access to the roof terrace.
• A landscaped pond has been installed on the east elevation adjacent to the spiral staircase, with a chrome and glass balustrade along its entire length.
• Glazing has been inserted into all the full-height openings on the east, north and south elevations, incorporating overly wide metal frame profiles.

This application seeks permission for a Retention of pool building, basement car park, lift and enclosure, external courtyards, pond and associated hard and soft landscaping (revised siting), phased alterations to pool building (reduction in height), removal of staircase, removal of glazed balustrade to pond and alterations to fenestration of main façade.

The proposal seeks to regularise the built form but also proposes a number of changes.

In terms of the height of the pool building, the revised elevations which now also show the main house indicate that the proposed reduction in height of the parapet wall will still lead to a taller structure than approved, being above the level of the tops of the ground floor windows by some 400mm. Although the height of the building could be reduced further this would compromise the

proportions of the façade and further undermine the original design concept. The proposed reduction in height combined with the additional 5.3m offset from the listed building helps to mitigate the visual dominance of the east elevation of the pool building while maintaining the proportions of the approved scheme. Moving the pool building 5.3m further away from Hemingford Park Hall has substantially mitigated the impact of its massing on the significance of the listed building.

It is noted that there are air conditioning units on the roof. These may be visible following the reduction of the parapet wall. Officers recommends a condition to ensure they are appropriately located on the roof to minimise visual impact.

The height of the original approved rear wall was 1.9m to top of coping, the actual height as built is 2.8m an increase in height of 90cm. This increase in height has partly been mitigated by the increased level of separation from the Listed Building which has, to a degree, limited the visual impact of the structure within its setting. The modern appearance of the structure could be further mitigated by the introduction of planting, although no comprehensive scheme of soft landscaping has been submitted.

While it is likely that the ground surface level has also risen this increase is not perceptible from within the walled garden.

It is considered that with further mitigation through a sensitive scheme of planting the massing of the building could be broken up and made acceptable. A condition is therefore recommended on this basis.

Although the volume of the subterranean elements of the pool building are considerably larger than the approved scheme they do not form a part of the pool building that is experienced in conjunction with the listed building and therefore do not impact its setting.

It is agreed that the subterranean car park will not cause harm to the setting of the listed building as the car lift area is relatively small and has a limited visual impact.

The revised scheme responds to comments from Historic England which sees the omission of the central door and loss of of transom glazing bar. This will reduce the visual impact of elements infilling the open portico as intended in the approved scheme. The use of clear, rather than tinted, glass will further mitigate this impact.

As built, the window apertures do not reach to ground level as approved which gives the windows a foreshortened appearance and undermines the proportions of the approved scheme. However, the general arrangement of the east elevation of the pool building as built broadly reflects the architectural style and rhythm of fenestration of Hemingford Park Hall. On balance the revised windows and apertures are acceptable. A condition is recommended to secure this.

The proposed removal of the external spiral staircase to the north elevation of the pavilion is supported as it is a visually inappropriate element. The removal of the external spiral staircase to the north elevation of the pavilion removes access to the roof and therefore removes the use as a terrace.

The proposal is to remove all the glazed balustrading in the vicinity of the pond feature. Removal of this visually discordant modern feature within the setting of the listed building is desirable and therefore supported.

Decimus Burton built the Hemingford Park Hall in order that the parkland and house could be experienced in a harmonious relationship in which the house was an impressive structure within the landscape and the landscape added natural beauty for the occupants of the house. This

philosophy is reflected in the 2014 approval for a pavilion building that sat comfortably within the setting of the main house.

When experienced close to the pool building the uncompromising urban appearance of the existing tarmac detracts from the neo classical architectural qualities of the pavilion and underlines the incongruous nature of the finish within the green setting to the Hall. Attention is also drawn away from the listed building towards the new development and therefore the hard standing visually reinforces the presence of the pool building while eroding the special relationship of the Hall with its parkland setting. In wider views this impact is made evident and intensified by the topography of the ground which falls away from the house and allows the full expanse of the Tarmac to be viewed.

The Conservation Team has advised that the harm to the significance of the listed building is serious but less than substantial. The harm could be totally alleviated by removing the tarmac hard standing in front of the pool building and reverting to turf while redesigning the access to the car park to avoid the sensitive setting to the east of the listed building. The applicant has agreed to a condition requiring an alternative finish to the hard standing including the reinstatement of further grassed areas. Subject to the inclusion of this condition, the harm would therefore be alleviated.

Historic England confirm that they have no objections to the application on heritage grounds.

*Residential Amenity

Given the siting away from neighbouring properties, the development is considered acceptable in terms of overshadowing, overbearing impact, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light and would not have a significant impact upon residential amenity and therefore accords with Policy LP14 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036 in this regard.

*Other Matters

Householder application

Concern has been raised by neighbouring parties that the application should not be considered as a householder application but a full application due to the commercial nature of the development and the connection to the track in front of Hemingford Park Hall.

Firstly, the Council has validated the application as a householder application and therefore has accepted it as householder application. Officers must consider the application as submitted. It is for a building ancillary to the main house. The application is not seeking a change of use. The proposed works are within the residential curtilage of Hemingford Park Hall.

The track in front of Hemingford Park Hall is not part of the development under this householder application and therefore falls outside the scope of the application.

Building Control

Officers not the Parish Council request regarding building control signing off the work. It is not within planning remit to enter into building regulation matters, and the onus is on the applicant to ensure the works are carried out in a correct matter.

*Conclusion

Officers have considered the advice from Historic England alongside the Council's own Conservation Team.

Cumulatively the removal of the harmful elements, the reduction of the height and also the physical separation between the listed building and the main bulk of the pool building mitigates harm to the special interest of the building as the extension is broadly considered to be of a broadly acceptable scale and massing. Where the massing has been identified as being excessive (the western wall of pool building located within the walled garden) this could be mitigated by an approved scheme of planting secured by a condition. The current tarmac hardstanding detracts from the Listed Building. This harm could be alleviated by an alternative finish which will be secured through condition.

Taking national and local planning policies into account, and having regard for all relevant material considerations, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to the imposition of appropriate conditions.

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CONTACT OFFICER:
Enquiries about this report to **Lewis Tomlinson**